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PM-SOVTROOPS SKED 9-1

BY JIM ANDERSON

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE INTENDS TO CONFRONT SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI GROMYKO NEXT MONTH WITH U.S. EVIDENCE OF THE FIRST DETECTED RUSSIAN COMBAT TROOPS STATIONED IN CUBA.

U.S. OFFICIALS SAID FRIDAY VANCE WILL TAKE GROMYKO TO TASK ABOUT THE NEWLY DETECTED, TANK-LED COMBAT BRIGADE AT A MID-SEPTEMBER MEETING IN NEW YORK CITY. GROMYKO WILL BE IN THE UNITED STATES TO ADDRESS THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE OFFICIALS SAID THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY WARNED THE SOVIET EMBASSY THAT THE SECRET BUILD-UP OF UP TO 3,000 RUSSIAN COMBAT TROOPS "WILL BURDEN THE RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS.

SEN. RICHARD STONE, D.-FLA., WHO RAN INTO STATE DEPARTMENT DENIALS WHEN HE FIRST DREW ATTENTION TO THE BUILD-UP, SAID THE INCIDENT REFLECTS A SERIOUS U.S. INTELLIGENCE FAILURE.

STONE'S OFFICE PRODUCED A JULY 27, 1979, LETTER IN WHICH VANCE SAID "THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE OF THE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN CUBA OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS OR THE PRESENCE OF A SOVIET MILITARY BASE."

A SPOKESMAN FOR VANCE SAID THE LETTER "WAS BASED ON THE FACTS KNOWN TO US AT THE TIME." U.S. OFFICIALS SAID A STEPPED-UP SURVEILLANCE EFFORT PRODUCED NEW EVIDENCE THIS WEEK.

THE OFFICIALS SAID THE INTELLIGENCE CHECK INDICATED THE KREMLIN HAS BEEN SENDING COMBAT TROOPS TO COMMUNIST-RULED CUBA SINCE AS FAR BACK AS 1976.

A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE SOVIET COMBAT BRIGADE DOESN'T CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO EITHER THE UNITED STATES OR U.S. NAVAL BASE IN CUBA'S GUANTANAMO BAY.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO SAID IT DOESN'T CONSTITUTE A "BASE" AND PRESUMABLY WOULDN'T BE SUBJECT TO AMERICA'S TOUGH STAND AGAINST THE KREMLIN ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT INSTALLATION IN THE HEMISPHERE.

PRESIDENT CARTER HAS SAID THE UNITED STATES "WOULD OPPOSE ANY EFFORT -- DIRECT OR INDIRECT -- BY THE SOVIET UNION TO ESTABLISH MILITARY BASES IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE."

BUT STONE SAID THE PRESENCE OF A SOVIET COMBAT BRIGADE -- WHICH INCLUDES ARMOR, ARTILLERY AND INFANTRY -- IS A "BASE" IN THE MILITARY SENSE AND IT'S TIME FOR THE UNITED STATES "TO DRAW THE LINE."

THE NEW SOVIET TROOPS, THE FIRST RUSSIAN COMBAT FORCES IN CUBA DETECTED BY U.S. RECONNAISSANCE, BRING THE TOTAL SOVIET PERSONNEL ON THE ISLAND TO AS MANY AS 13,000 -- INCLUDING UP TO 2,000 NON-COMBAT MILITARY ADVISORS AND TECHNICIANS.